

VZCZCXYZ0000  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHDM #0717 0541331  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 231331Z FEB 06  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7260  
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0661  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 000717

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

PARIS FOR ZEYA, LONDON FOR TSOU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/23/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPAL](#) [EG](#) [SY](#) [LB](#)  
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN DIPLOMAT SIGNALS MUBARAK VISIT TO DAMASCUS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Stephen A. Seche for reasons  
1.4 b/d

¶1. (C) An Egyptian diplomat cited two recent phone calls between Syrian President Bashar al-Asad and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, as well as a Kuwaiti news report, as indicators of a possible upcoming Mubarak visit. The Kuwaiti article reported that Mubarak would visit Damascus on February 26, said the diplomat who noted that, in the past, Egyptian Embassy officials have received one-day notification of Mubarak-Asad meetings. Topics of conversation would likely include regional developments, the UNIIIC investigation, and efforts by the Egyptians, the Saudis and the Arab League to help mend Syrian-Lebanese relations, the diplomat said. (Note: Qatar's FM, who met with Asad during his February 21-22 visit to Damascus, also likely discussed ways to improve Syria-Lebanon ties, the diplomat said.)

¶2. (C) On Hamas, the Egyptian diplomat said that Russian officials in Damascus had been seeking information about possible ties between the rejectionist group and Chechen groups. Hamas' Damascus-based Political Bureau leader Khalid Mish'al had no plans to leave Syria definitively in the near future and would continue in exile to play a lead role in Hamas decision-making, the diplomat said. Hamas leaders were still devising their political priorities for the Hamas-led government, the Egyptian said.

¶3. (C) The diplomat had no information about meetings between the new UNIIIC investigator Serge Brammertz who arrived in Damascus the morning of February 23 (reportedly traveling by road from Beirut) and departed several hours later. Egypt continued to push the SARG to cooperate fully with UNIIIC investigators but believed that a mechanism should be found to allow a meeting between Brammertz and Asad while preserving the dignity of the Syrian President's office, the diplomat said.  
SECHE